

July 20.

I am putting my house in order and preparing for a six months' sojourn and solitude amid the groves of Bradenham. . . London is emptying fast, but gay. Lady Cork¹ had two routs. 'All my best people, no blues.' At a concert at Mrs. Mitford's I was introduced to Malibran, who is to be the heroine of my opera. She is a very interesting person.

Aug. 4.

My letters are shorter than Napoleon's, but I love you more than he did Josephine. I shall be down tomorrow.²

'I wish,' wrote his father on some occasion, 'that your organization allowed you to write calmer letters, and that you could sober yourself down to a diary before you went to bed.' To a diary in the ordinary sense Disraeli never did succeed in sobering himself down, but in these quiet autumn months at Bradenham he began a document which has unfortunately not escaped the ravages of time and is known to those who have engaged in the exploration of his papers as the 'Mutilated Diary.'

Sept. 1, 1833.

I have passed the whole of this year in uninterrupted lounging and pleasure — with the exception of offering myself for Marylebone and writing a pamphlet, but the expected vacancy, thank God, did not occur: and one incident has indeed made this year the happiest of my life. How long will these feelings last? They have stood a great test, and now absence, perhaps the most fatal of all. My life has not been a happy one. Nature has given me an awful ambition

¹ Mary Countess of Cork (1746-1840), widow of the 7th Earl, who died in 1798. Before her marriage she was the Miss Monckton whom we meet in Boswell; whose 'vivacity enchanted the sage'; and whom John son crushed in argument with the retort, 'Dearest, you're a dunce,' adding, when she reproached him afterwards, 'Madam, if I had thought so, I certainly should not have said it.' She was a lion-hunter all her life and, beside the members of Johnson's circle, had known the Prince Regent, Castlereagh, Canning, Byron, Scott, and a hundred other celebrities. We shall find her appearing in *Henrietta Temple* as Lady Bellair.

² *Letters*, pp. 83-84.